

Message Text

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USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR

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AMCONSUL IZMIR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 4 ANKARA 9318

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJECT: POLITICAL TRENDS ANALYSIS: ECEVIT AND FOREIGN POLICY

REF: POLITICAL REPORTING PLAN FOR TURKEY

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IF AN ECEVIT-LED COALITION GOVERNMENT IS FORMED,
IT WILL PROBABLY FOLLOW THE LINES OF TRADITIONAL TURKISH FOREIGN
POLICY MORE CLOSELY THAN ECEVIT AND MANY OF HIS PARTY WOULD LIKE.
NEVERTHELESS, THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT DESPITE COALITION CON-
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STRAINTS, ECEVIT WILL SET THE TONE. A FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTIC
OF ECEVIT'S POLITICAL STYLE IS A NEED TO APPEAR DECISIVE,
INDEPENDENT AND INNOVATIVE. THE RESULTING ACTIONS CAN BE
DRAMATICALLY POSITIVE, BUT THEY CAN ALSO BE ILL-ADVISED AND
NEGATIVE. ECEVIT RECOGNIZES THE NEED FOR STRONG RELATIONSHIPS
WITH THE US AND NATO. HE BELIEVES THESE RELATIONSHIPS CAN AND
SHOULD BE MORE BENEFICIAL TO TURKEY, HOWEVER. DESPITE HIS HARD-

LINE APPROACH TO THE AEGEAN QUESTION, ECEVIT HAS GENERALLY BEEN CONCILIATORY TOWARD GREECE AND HE MIGHT LAUNCH A PEACE OFFENSIVE SOON AFTER TAKING OFFICE. ON CYPRUS ECEVIT HAS GENERALLY BEEN SEEN AS WILLING AND ABLE TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT. RECENT STATEMENTS HAVE CAST DOUBTS ON THAT VIEW, HOWEVER. DEALING EFFECTIVELY WITH ECEVIT WILL TAKE BOTH IMAGINATION AND PATIENCE.
END SUMMARY

2. THE MOST LIKELY OUTCOME OF THE CURRENT POLITICAL CRISIS IN ANKARA, IT NOW APPEARS, WILL BE THE FORMATION OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT BY REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) CHAIRMAN ECEVIT. WE THEREFORE THINK IT IS PARTICULARLY TIMELY TO REVIEW WHAT WE KNOW OF ECEVIT AS A FOREIGN POLICY ACTOR, ESPECIALLY IN REGARD TO US-TURKISH RELATIONS, TURKISH-GREEK RELATIONS, AND THE CYPRUS PROBLEM.

3. COALITION CONSTRAINTS:

A. THE FACT THAT ECEVIT WILL NOT HAVE A FREE HAND TO IMPLEMENT HIS PARTY PROGRAM WILL BE FELT MORE IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS THAN IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. IT WILL PROBABLY FORCE ECEVIT TO ADHERE MORE CLOSELY TO TRADITIONAL LINES OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY THAN HE OR THE LEFT WING OF HIS PARTY MIGHT WISH. NEVERTHELESS, THE ABSENCE OF THE ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALIST NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) FROM THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD RESULT IN A MORE COHERENT APPROACH TO FOREIGN POLICY THAN ANY OTHER TURKISH GOVERNMENT HAS ENJOYED SINCE 1973.

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B. IN A CONVERSATION DEC. 20, RPP DEPUTY SEC GEN HASAN ESAT ISIK (DEFENSE MINISTER IN BOTH PREVIOUS ECEVIT GOVERNMENTS AND PARTY SPOKESMAN ON FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS) TOLD US THAT THE RPP HAD RECONCILED ITSELF TO A COALITION WHICH WOULD RESTRICT ITS FLEXIBILITY IN FOREIGN POLICY. INITIALLY, DOMESTIC ISSUES-- ESPECIALLY POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND THE ECONOMY--WOULD TAKE PRIORITY, HE SAID. ISIK WAS UNWILLING TO ENTER INTO DETAILED DISCUSSION OF FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES (INCLUDING THE DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT) UNTIL THE NEW COALITION HAD BEEN FORMED AND COULD DECIDE ITS POSITIONS. HE DID, HOWEVER, REPEATEDLY AFFIRM THE RPP'S COMMITMENTS TO IMPROVING THE POLITICAL, SECURITY AND ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE U.S.

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4. THE ECEVIT PERSONALITY IN DIPLOMACY:
A. RPP FOREIGN POLICY IS DOMINATED BY ECEVIT. IT IS THEREFORE
MORE PERSONALISTIC AND LESS PREDICTABLE THAN THE POLICIES OF THE
PRESENT GOVERNMENT. IN BOTH DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY
DECISIONS, ECEVIT SEEMS HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY A DESIRE TO APPEAR
DECISIVE, INDEPENDENT, AND INNOVATIVE--SO MUCH SO THAT STYLE
RATHER THAN SUBSTANCE OFTEN APPEARS TO GOVERN THE ECEVIT DECISION-
MAKING PROCESS. HIS DECISION IN THE SPRING OF 1974 TO SEND THE
SURVEY SHIP "CANDARLI" INTO THE AEGEAN (OSTENSIBLY TO SEARCH
FOR OIL, ALTHOUGH THE "CANDARLI" HAD VIRTUALLY NO CAPACITY FOR
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SUCH WORK) APPARENTLY WAS MOTIVATED BY A DESIRE TO IMPROVE HIS
IMAGE AS A NATIONALIST. THE DECISION THAT SAME YEAR TO LIFT
THE BAN ON OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION (CONTRARY TO AN AGREEMENT
WITH THE US) WAS IN RESPONSE TO A DOMESTIC POLITICAL "IMPERATIVE"
HE HAD HIMSELF CREATED TO SHOW THAT HE (PERSONIFYING TURKEY)
COULD WITHSTAND PRESSURE FROM THE US. IN THESE ACTIONS "STYLE"
HAD A SUBSTANTIVE EFFECT. THE POPPY CULTIVATION DECISION
BROUGHT ABOUT A STRAIN IN US-TURKISH RELATIONS; THE "CANDARLI"

EXPANDED TURKEY'S SUPPORT OF ITS CLAIMS IN THE AEGEAN AND
HEIGHTENED TENSIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND GREECE.

B. THE RESULTS OF THE PRIMACY OF STYLE IN ECEVIT'S
DECISION-MAKING ARE NOT ALWAYS HARMFUL. ECEVIT, BECAUSE OF
THIS PROCLIVITY, IS MUCH MORE LIKELY TO UNDERTAKE CONSTRUCTIVE
AND COURAGEOUS FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES THAN DEMIREL. FOR
EXAMPLE, HIS FINAL ACT IN THE POPPY QUESTION WAS TO AGREE TO AN
EFFECTIVE CONTROL PROGRAM WHICH WAS BEING URGED ON HIM BY
OUTSIDERS. SIMILARLY, HE PROBABLY DOES NOT CONSIDER HIS RECENT
TOUGH TALK ON CYPRUS AND THE AEGEAN (SEE BELOW) TO BE THE FINAL
WORD, AND HE HAS THE POLITICAL CONFIDENCE AND FLAIR TO BE ABLE TO
REVERSE HIMSELF AND LAUNCH A DRAMATIC PEACE OFFENSIVE ON
BOTH ISSUES.

C. OTHER PERSONAL FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE HIS DECISIONS
PROBABLY INCLUDE:

- (1) A SELF-IMAGE AS A EUROPEAN INTELLECTUAL, COUPLED WITH
AN INTEREST IN THE APPROVAL AND SUPPORT OF EUROPEAN SOCIAL DE-
MOCRATS.
- (2) A SUSPICION THAT THE USG IS OPPOSED TO HIS BEING IN POWER
AND A CONCOMITANT READINESS TO BELIEVE THAT THE CIA IS ACTIVELY
WORKING AGAINST HIM.
- (3) A PENCHANT FOR PERSONAL DIPLOMACY. (HE ENJOYS CONTACTS WITH
WORLD LEADERS AND WAS PROUD OF HIS GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH SEC-
RETARY KISSINGER. THE DRAMA ASSOCIATED WITH SUMMIT MEETINGS
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APPEALS TO HIM.)

- (4) A NEGATIVE REACTION TO BILATERAL US PRESSURE.
- (5) A POSITIVE REACTION TO INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION.
- (6) A FASCINATION WITH THE RHETORIC OF THE THIRD WORLD.
- (7) A DISTAST FOR CAPITALISM.
- (8) AN UPPER-CLASS BACKGROUND.

5. U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONS:

A. ECEVIT RECOGNIZES--ALBEIT, WE ASSUME, RELUCTANTLY-- THAT
TURKEY'S SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIP IS WIT THE
U.S. UNDOUBTEDLY HE WOULD, AS ISIK SAID, LIKE TO IMPROVE THAT
RELATIONSHIP. BY IMPROVEMENT, HOWEVER, HE PROBABLY HAS IN MIND
CREATING WHAT HE WOULD CONSIDER TO BE A MORE ADVANTAGEOUS
RELATIONSHIP FOR TURKEY. SENSITIVE TO THE POWER GAP THAT SEP-
ARATES THE TWO COUNTRIES, ECEVIT WILL BE ZEALOUS IN THE DEFENSE
OF TURKISH NATIONAL DIGNITY.

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B. ECEVIT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD NATO IS COLORED BY THE SAME SENSITIVITY. HE ACCEPTS THE NEED FOR CONTINUED TURKISH PARTICIPATION BUT SUBSCRIBES TO (AND IS WILLING TO EXPLOIT DOMESTICALLY) THE POPULAR TURKISH IDEA THAT TURKEY GIVES MUCH MORE THAN IT GETS. HE HAS COMMITTED HIMSELF AND HIS PARTY TO A VAGUE "NEW DEFENSE CONCEPT" WHICH WOULD APPARENTLY MODIFY TURKEY'S NATO ROLE IN ORDER "TO MAKE THE ALLIANCE MORE RESPONSIVE TO TURKISH NEEDS."

C. BECAUSE OF HIS SENSITIVITY ABOUT THE PERCEIVED DANGERS OF OVERDEPENDENCE ON THE US AND NATO, ECEVIT PRESUMABLY WILL WANT TO
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CONTINUE AND PERHAPS EVEN ACCELERATE TURKEY'S EFFORTS TO CREATE POLICY ALTERNATIVES BY EXPANDING RELATIONS WITH ITS COMMUNIST NEIGHBORS AND THE MUSLIM WORLD. (SEE ANKARA 8224 DTG 090935Z NOV 77).

6. WE CANNOT FORECAST WITH CERTAINTY WHAT THE ATTITUDE OF AN

ECEVIT COALITION WILL BE TOWARD THE US-TURKISH DCA. IT IS NOT ECEVIT'S AGREEMENT, HAVING BEEN NEGOTIATED BY THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT, AND HIS INITIAL REACTION TO THE AGREEMENT IN 1976 WAS AMBIVALENT. HE SAID THEN THAT IT WAS NOT EXACTLY WHAT HE WANTED, BUT UNTIL HE CAME TO POWER AND WAS ABLE TO IMPLEMENT HIS "NEW DEFENSE CONCEPT", IT WOULD DO. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES WANT AND NEED THE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED FOR IN THE DCA, AND ECEVIT HAS GOOD COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE MILITARY AND IS ATTENTIVE TO ITS NEEDS AND DESIRES. HE MIGHT, HOWEVER, DECIDE THAT IT WOULD BE POLITICALLY ADVANTAGEOUS TO REDESIGN THE PACKAGE UNDER WHICH SUCH ASSISTANCE IS PROVIDED. HE COULD ALSO, GIVEN THE LIMITED FLEXIBILITY HE WILL HAVE AS A COALITION LEADER, DECIDE TO SUPPORT THE DCA WHILE PROMISING TO CONCLUDE BETTER ARRANGEMENTS THE NEXT TIME AROUND. ONE ADDITIONAL FACTOR WHICH MIGHT INFLUENCE HIS ATTITUDE IS THE LIKELIHOOD THAT FINAL US APPROVAL OF THE DCA WILL BE POPULAR DOMESTICALLY,

AND ECEVIT WOULD LIKE TO BE THE BENEFICIARY OF THAT POPULAR REACTION.

7. TURKISH-GREEK RELATIONS:

A. ECEVIT HAS GENERALLY ASSUMED A CONCILIATORY ATTITUDE TOWARD GREECE, ALTHOUGH ON SPECIFIC ISSUES HE CAN BE VERY TOUGH. HIS BASIC PHILOSOPHY IN DEALING WITH GREECE SEEMS SIMILAR TO THAT OF GREEK PRIME MINISTER KARAMANLIS IN DEALING WITH TURKEY, I.E., THE TWO NATIONS ARE FORCED TO LIVE TOGETHER, SO THEY MUST FIND SOME WAY TO DO SO PEACEFULLY. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS PHILOSOPHY SOME-TIMES

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BREAKS DOWN IN THE TRANSLATION FROM ABSTRACT TO POLICY.

B. ON THE AEGEAN QUESTION, THE MOST IMPORTANT BILATERAL ISSUE CONFRONTING THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, ECEVIT INITIATED IN 1974 A NEW TURKISH ASSERTIVENESS IN THE AEGEAN BY SENDING OUT THE "CANDARLI". WHILE OUT OF POWER HE HAS BEEN EVEN MORE ASSERTIVE AND SOME OF THE STATEMENTS MADE BY RPP SPOKESMEN DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS HAVE BEEN AT BEST CHAUVINISTIC AND AT WORST PROVOCATIVE-- IN EITHER CASE IRRESPONSIBLE. ECEVIT WILL NOT NECESSARILY LAUNCH A CAMPAIGN TO DEFEND TURKISH "RIGHTS" IN THE AEGEAN AS SOON AS HE COMES TO POWER, BUT THE DANGER EXISTS THAT IF HE DECIDES HE NEEDS AN ISSUE TO HELP HIM DOMESTICALLY, THIS COULD BE THE ONE.

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C. FORTUNATELY, MORE LIKELY IN THE EARLY STAGES OF A NEW ECEVIT GOVERNMENT IS THE POSSIBILITY OF A PEACE INITIATIVE BY ECEVIT A LA SADAT. IF ECEVIT DOES EMBARK ON SUCH AN INITIATIVE, AND IF HE RECEIVES AN INITIAL, POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM ATHENS, WE BELIEVE THAT HIS DESIRE TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN WAGING PEACE (THE PRIMACY OF STYLE OVER SUBSTANCE) WOULD TEND TO MAKE HIM FAIRLY FLEXIBLE AND FORTHCOMING. ONE KEY UNCERTAINTY IS WHETHER THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT WILL APPEAR TO CARAMANLIS TO HAVE THE NECESSARY POWER AND STABILITY TO BE WORTH NEGOTIATING WITH.

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8. THE CYPRUS ISSUE:
BECAUSE ECEVIT WAS PRIMIN WHEN TURKEY INTERVENED ON CYPRUS, IT HAS BECOME PART OF THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM IN ANKARA AND IN OTHER CAPITALS THAT HE IS THE MAN BEST ABLE TO REACH A SETTLEMENT. WHILE WE GENERALLY SUBSCRIBE TO THIS VIEW, TWO RELATIVELY RECENT ACTIONS HAVE GIVEN US PAUSE. THE FIRST WAS THE STATE-MANE (MADE IN JULY AFTER HIS GOVERNMENT FAILED TO WIN A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE) IN WHICH HE SAID HE HAD NEVER CONTEMPLATED THE RE-

TURN OF VAROSHA TO THE GREEK CYPRIOTS--WHICH WAS NOT ONLY NOT TRUE, BUT ALSO PLACED INCOMING PRMIN DEMIREL IN A VERY DIFFICULT POSITION. THE SECOND WAS HIS SIMILAR ASSERTION LAST WEEK IN A NEW YORK TIMES INTERVIEW WITH NICHOLAS GAGE THAT DEMIREL HAD BEEN MISTAKEN IN NOT ALLOWING TURKISH-CYPRIOT SETTLEMENT OF VAROSHA. WHILE THIS MAY SIMPLY BE AN ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH A BARGAINING POSITION (SEE ANKARA 9285 DTG 221502Z DEC 77 NOTAL, IT NEVERTHELESS GIVES THE IMPRESSION TO THE WORLD THAT ECEVIT HAS TOUGHENED HIS POSITION AND REDUCED HIS NEGOTIATING FLEXIBILITY.

9. CONCLUSION: ECEVIT'S NEED TO APPEAR DECISIVE AND INDEPENDENT AND HIS FLAIR FOR THE DRAMATIC COULD LEAD TO MAJOR, POSITIVE POLICY INITIATIVES IF HE RETURNS TO POWER. EQUALLY POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, ARE ILL-ADVISED ACTIONS WHICH COULD DAMAGE THE U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONSHIP. HE HAS ONE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT ASSET WHICH SHOULD NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED. HE IS ONE OF TURKEY'S FOREMOST MASTERS OF BOTH ENGLISH AND TURKISH AND IS THE COUNTRY'S MOST APPEALING AND CONVINCING SPOKESMAN BEFORE FOREIGN AUDIENCES. DEALING EFFECTIVELY WITH THIS CHARMING AND INTELLIGENT POLITICAL LEADER (WHO IS ALSO UNPREDICTABLE--EVEN IMPETUOUS-RESISTANT TO PRESSURE, SENSITIVE TO SLIGHT, AND PREOCCUPIED BY THE NEED TO BUILD HIS DOMESTIC POLITICAL STRENGTH) WILL REQUIRE EQUAL MEASURES OF IMAGINATION AND PATIENCE. WE SUGGEST IN DEALING WITH HIM THAT WE MAKE A CONSCIOUS EFFORT TO APPEAL TO HIS INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS, HIS FLAIR FOR THE DRAMATIC, AND HIS DESIRE FOR INTER-CONFIDENTIAL

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NATIONAL APPROBATION, AND THAT WE CATER TO HIS LIKING FOR DIRECT PERSONAL CONTACTS. ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE WE SHOULD CAREFULLY AVOID ANY APPEARANCE OF DIRECT BILATERAL PRESSURE, OF PERSONAL SLIGHTS OR OF NEGLECTING OR BELITTling HIS OR TURKEY'S WORLD ROLE.
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